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ABSTRACT

The Senior Elective Program at New Jersey's Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School was designed by eighteen students and six faculty members during the summer of 1971. Initiated to update curriculum to complement an open-space building exclusively for seniors, it included revamping the school calendar from four to five marking periods. Students are encouraged to telescope their traditional required courses into the first three years of high school, leaving the senior year essentially free for taking some of the 85 elective minicourses offered, for pursuing independent study, or for gaining work experience. An open campus policy increases student options. All seniors are also assigned to small discussion groups designed to provide support and help students adjust. Teachers are encouraged to develop instructional methods conducive to open-space areas. Evaluation of the program with the Watson-Glaser Test of Critical Thinking, The Sequential Test of Educational Progress in Social Studies, the Imagine That index, and the School Sentiment Index revealed academic achievement equal to that of a control group. A statistically significant improvement in student attitudes toward the educational experience was noted. This document includes information on how to obtain assistance in the establishment of similar programs elsewhere. (Author/PGD)

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Rumson-Fair Haven Senior Elective Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PREFACE

The development and evaluation of the Rumson-Fair Haven Senior Elective Program was a cooperative effort of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School District and the Office of Program Development, Division of Research, Planning and Evaluation, Department of Education, State of New Jersey. In 1974 this program was validated by the standards and guidelines of the United States Office of Education as successful, cost-effective, and exportable and approved for national dissemination by the Dissemination Review Panel. As a result, the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School District has been funded as a demonstration site whose staff offers interested educators the opportunity to see the program in operation, consultation services in the program's replication, and program materials. There is no charge for the services of the program staff. Materials are available at cost. The development and dissemination of this program are funded through the New Jersey Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title III program.

INTRODUCTION

The Rumson-Fair Haven Senior Elective Program offers high school students many curricular alternatives to fulfill their requirements for graduation. To students who complete these requirements in three years a combination of the following options are offered for the senior year: mini-elective courses, independent study projects, and preceptorials. To others a combination of traditional subjects as well as the options mentioned are available. The senior program is conducted in an open space building. An open campus policy allows seniors to follow highly flexible schedules based upon a modular scheduling procedure.

The program was developed and field tested over a three year period from 1971 to 1974. Students, teachers, and administrative staff were involved in the development effort. ESEA, Title III funding provided stipends required for planning the program, writing new courses of study, teacher training and evaluation. Total ESEA, Title III funding over the three year period was approximately $71,000.

As a result of the project, students' satisfaction and interest in their educational program improved without detriment to their academic achievement. The program's dissemination is based upon its success for students and its exportability.

In this final report of the project's development, the administrative staff of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School will describe its essential elements and discuss the cost and procedure for replication in other sites.

A NEED FOR CHANGE

Rumson and Fair Haven are middle-upper middle class suburban communities of approximately 14,000 people located in central New Jersey some fifty miles from New York City. Most of the adult citizens are professionals or business executives. Almost 90% of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School's enrollment of 1,300 students attend college. Many students complete the high school courses required for college admission in three years. Prior to the development of the Senior Elective Program, the senior year was anticlimactic for many students. Often, with their college requirements out of the way, they worked part time and were not interested in straight academics; school was frequently seen as boring, and, during the second half of the year, absenteeism increased sharply. Therefore the Board of Education and teaching and administrative staffs felt that they should alter the standard four-year program so that the senior year would offer greater variety and challenge to both students and staff. The development of the Senior Elective Program became the responsibility of Newton Beron, Assistant Superintendent.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Senior Elective Program was designed during the summer of 1971. Eighteen students and six teachers, with some administrative direction, were charged with the task of reviewing the existing program, researching the literature relating to curricular alternatives, and then making recommendations on ways to improve the structure and offerings for seniors. The theme behind the project was: "Make the program more human and less restrictive, with enough alternatives to allow for individual growth."

Choosing the Workers

Selecting the teachers and students to work on the project was time-consuming and complex. The professional staff was assembled for a briefing about the scope of the problem, time involvement and stipends available for summer work. All teachers were given the opportunity to make a formal application, and all who applied were interviewed. Factors such as professional background, interest in the project, and rapport with both students and faculty members influenced the selection. Final choices were made jointly by the project director, other administrators and the department chairmen. A student curriculum committee, an arm of the student government, helped select the student workers. Members of the committee spoke to homeroom groups describing the type of work, hourly commitments, and pay scale. The entire student body was given the opportunity to apply for the summer workshop, and several hundred did so. The

curriculum committee helped to reduce the list to a workable number, some fifty-four. An effort was made to select a cross-section of students from grades ten, eleven, and twelve representing a wide range of academic achievement levels and professional and vocational interests. Final selections were the responsibilities of the project director and participating teachers.

The Advisory Council

While students and teachers were being chosen for summer curriculum work, an Advisory Council of parents, clergy, students, teachers, and administrators was selected by the administrative staff. The Council was apprised of the need for the program and asked for its advice concerning the recommendations and suggestions for changes as the program developed. The Council also functioned as a sounding board for community concerns and attitudes.

Recommendations

The faculty-student curriculum team worked for a six-week period, sometimes as a unit of twenty-four and at other times in smaller groups. It studied materials from the county library, read magazines and texts, and carried on heated discussions.

A questionnaire was designed and distributed to parents regarding the existing high school program as well as suggestions for modifying and improving it. The results of the survey revealed that a majority of parents felt a need for more student independent work and a less structured curriculum. Teachers were polled on the avocational or professional interests or specialities in which they might offer courses. They were asked questions such as, "Would you be willing to offer a course in a special interest area within the subject you teach or in other topics, as for example, antiques, jewelry making, etc.?" The responses to this poll were tallied and a list of possible course offerings was compiled. A need for a thread to "tie the program together" evolved from the group discussions. Hence the concept of preceptorials, or precepts as they are called, came about. These are small discussion groups of a teacher or preceptor and no more than fifteen students whose purpose is to offer students guidance and support within the senior elective program.

The summer study group made the following recommendations to the administrative staff and the Board of Education:

1. Subdivide the school year into five facets instead of four marking periods. Each facet should be a seven-week period of time, separated by a one-week vacation period.
2. Allow students the opportunity to consolidate their traditional courses required for high school graduation and college admission into three years (grades 9-11) so that the senior curriculum may concentrate on electives and independent study projects.
3. Design a twelfth grade program consisting of traditional courses, mini-electives and preceptorials spanning the entire five facets.
4. Allow students the option of carrying out independent study projects during facets three, four, and five.

These recommendations were accepted by the Board of Education and formed the basis of the program's development. The objectives were a flexible senior schedule with more curricular offerings and greater student independence with no loss by the students in critical thinking ability or mastery of essential subject matter. Students, faculty, and administrators believed that this program would make school more interesting, more directly related to higher education and to "real-life" situations. Since the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School was already under modular scheduling, the senior program merely added another dimension and was thus feasible within existing scheduling procedures.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

The Student

During the academic year 1971-1972 final preparations were made to introduce the Senior Elective Program. It began in September, 1972. The program included some forty new elective mini-courses based upon projected student requests and the availability of teaching personnel. Preceptors, the cadre of staff members interested in serving as seminar leaders, were selected from a list of volunteers. Students, in groups of approximately fifteen, were randomly assigned to each of these groups. A typical student selected traditional, year-long courses, a few of the new mini-electives (some chose as many as thirteen), and a topic for independent study. Students also attended a forty minute preceptorial twice a week.

Some student schedules were very heavy, 90% saturated, while others were extremely light, allowing students 40% of their school day unscheduled or "free." All schedules were hand-tailored to satisfy the immediate and future plans of each student.

In anticipation of the implementation of the Senior Elective Program, students were encouraged to complete as many as possible of the courses required for graduation and, if appropriate, college entrance, prior to their entrance into grade twelve. As a result, approximately 97% of the senior class, about 250 students, were able to take advantage of the new program. A few students who were eligible for the program, however, chose to graduate early to enter college, the military service, or the job market.

John Jones, the student whose schedule is illustrated, is taking one traditional year-long course in Sociology, five mini-courses in Jewelry and Lapidary, The Bible as Literature, Laboratory Technology, College Board Review, and Criminology plus Physical Education and Health. He is scheduled for two preceptorial meetings per week and may choose to do an independent study project. Note that the schedule includes several blocks of unscheduled or free time in which the student may remain on campus or leave as he chooses. Should he remain he may use the senior lounge or library to study or relax.

SENIOR WING

Name John Jones Grade 12
Address Main Street H.R. 55-1
Ramson, NJ Phone 892-0000

Mod	Time	M	T	W	TH	F
1	8:10 8:30	Phys. Ed.				
2	8:30 8:50					
3	8:50 9:10	B Gym	Col. Bd. Rev.		Col. Bd. Rev.	Lab. Tech.
4	9:10 9:30		M-3		M-3	SCI-1
5	9:30 9:50				Bible as	
6	9:50 10:10			Precept	Lit. E-1	Precept
7	10:10 10:30	Jewel & Lap.	Sociology	SS-1		SS-1
8	10:30 10:50	AR-1	Adamson	Phys. Ed.	Lab. Tech.	
9	10:50 11:10		Room		SCI-1	Sociology
L 10	11:10 11:30	Bible as		B Gym		SS-2
L 11	11:30 11:50	Lit. E-1			Sociology	Health
L 12	11:50 12:10				SS-2	#105
L 13	12:10 12:30			Sociology		
L 14	12:30 12:50	Lab. Tech.	Lab. Tech.	SS-2		Jewel & Lap.
L 15	12:50 1:10	SCI-1	SCI-1	Crimin.		AR-1
L 16	1:10 1:30			SS-4		
L 17	1:30 1:50					Crimin.
18	1:50 2:10					SS-4
19	2:10 2:30					

The Teacher

Since teachers were asked to function with new responsibilities while teaching in an open space environment, new skills were needed. The Teaching Behavior Institute, directed by Mr. Muska Mosston, provided in-service seminars during the 1972 school year and in the summer to prepare teachers for their new roles.[1] Alternative teaching styles were learned, videotaped, and critiqued. Those staff members who were selected to be preceptors also worked on the development of group interaction and behavioral skills. Each teacher received a stipend for the summer training. In addition, a per course fee was paid to teachers for the development of outlines and parameters for the new mini-electives.

The fifty teachers who take part in the senior elective program each year do so on a voluntary basis. They have three kinds of responsibilities: supervising independent study projects, developing and teaching mini-courses, and conducting preceptorials. Teachers may have one or more of these assignments during any one academic year, and may, in addition, teach traditional courses to seniors and underclassmen. There is a high degree of flexibility in teacher scheduling so that the range of teacher functions within the total high school program may vary from year to year.

Teachers are scheduled for approximately 80% of the school week and have 20% unscheduled or planning time. The teacher, whose schedule is shown as an example, has the following responsibilities:

1. Two sections of 11th grade U.S. History II; Level 1, Section 1 and Level 2, Section 3. The teacher shares a large group responsibility for this program with two others on Wednesday, mods 3, 4 & 5. (Traditional courses such as U.S. History are homogeneously grouped in 3 levels).
2. Four sections of Introduction to Psychology, a senior mini-elective. Each section meets twice a week, *e.g.*, Section 1 meets on Monday during mods 1 & 2 and Tuesday, mods 7 & 8.
3. Four sections of Criminology, another senior mini-elective scheduled similarly to Introduction to Psychology.
4. Preceptorials: Mods 6 & 7 on Wednesdays and Fridays.
5. Social Studies Resource Center supervision, ten modular units a week.
6. Department meeting once a week (Thursday, mods 10 & 11).

The Administrator

The impetus for the senior elective program came from the administrators. They were convinced that a new curriculum was needed to mesh with an open space building which was being erected. Through their efforts, the Board of Education was "sold on the idea" of asking for student and faculty help in reshaping the high school program.

Furthermore, the administrative staff felt a need to be involved with teachers and students at all levels. They attended workshops held by the Teacher Behavior Institute learning alternative styles of teaching. They also agreed to teach mini-courses in the senior program. The school superintendent offered a course in Secondary Education. The three assistant superintendents offered the following: Genetics, Antiques and State and Local Government.

[1]Muska Mosston, *Teaching: From Command to Discovery*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., Belmont, California, 1972.

TEACHER John Smith DEPARTMENT Social Studies HOMEROOM SS1 Grade 12

PD.			MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	8:10	8:30	Int. to Psychology	U.S. History II	Criminology	U.S. History II	Social Studies
2	8:30	8:50	Sec. 1 SS-1	Lev. 1 Sec. 1 SS-1	Sec. 1 SS-1	Lev. 1 Sec. 1 SS-1	Resource Center
3	8:50	9:10	U.S. History II		U.S. History II		
4	9:10	9:30	Lev. 1 SS-1 Sec. 1	Int. to Psychology	L.G.	Criminology	Int. to Psychology
5	9:30	9:50		Sec. 3 SS-1	Lecture Room	Sec. 3 SS-1	Sec. 4 SS-1
6	9:50	10:10			Precept		Precept
7	10:10	10:30		Int. to Psychology	SS-1	Int. to Psychology	SS-1
8	10:30	10:50	Int. to Psychology	Sec. 1 SS-1		Sec. 3 SS-1	
9	10:50	11:10	Sec. 2 SS-1				
10	11:10	11:30	Criminology	Lunch	Lunch	Dept. Meeting	U.S. History II
11	11:30	11:50	Sec. 1 SS-1	Lunch	Lunch	Soc. Stu. Res. Cen.	Lev. 1 SS-1 Sec. 1
12	11:50	12:10	U.S. History II	U.S. History II	Criminology	U.S. History II	Lunch
13	12:10	12:30	Lev. 2 Sec. 3 SS-1	Lev. 2 Sec. 3 SS-1	Sec. 3 SS-1	Lev. 2 Sec. 3 SS-1	Lunch
14	12:30	12:50	Lunch	Int. to Psychology	Int. to Psychology	Lunch	Criminology
15	12:50	1:10	Lunch	Sec. 4 SS-1	Sec. 2 SS-1	Lunch	Sec. 4 SS-1
16	1:10	1:30		Social Studies	Criminology	Criminology	Social Studies
17	1:30	1:50		Resource Center	Sec. 2 SS-1	Sec. 4 SS-1	Resource Center
18	1:50	2:10	Criminology		Social Studies	Social Studies	U.S. History II
19	2:10	3:30	Sec. 2 SS-1		Resource Center	Resource Center	Lev. 2 SS-1 Sec. 3

Two administrators designed a method for course selection as well as the master schedule for seniors. Initially, students were given a list of proposed course offerings, overviews of the courses, and course parameters such as prerequisites, grading and credits. They made their selections from this list and enrollment tallies were generated. The actual courses which made up the senior mini-electives were selected from these tallies. The courses were set into a master schedule configuration and each student's schedule was made up. At this point the senior guidance counsellor reviewed them, making certain that they were realistic in terms of future vocational pursuits. Those students whose schedules appeared inconsistent with their future plans were requested to make appropriate adjustments.

THE PROGRAM'S ESSENTIALS

The essential elements of the Senior Elective Program are the mini-course electives, independent study opportunities, and preceptorials offered to students within a setting of an open campus policy and a modular scheduling procedure. In this section each of these elements is described in greater detail.

Mini-course Electives

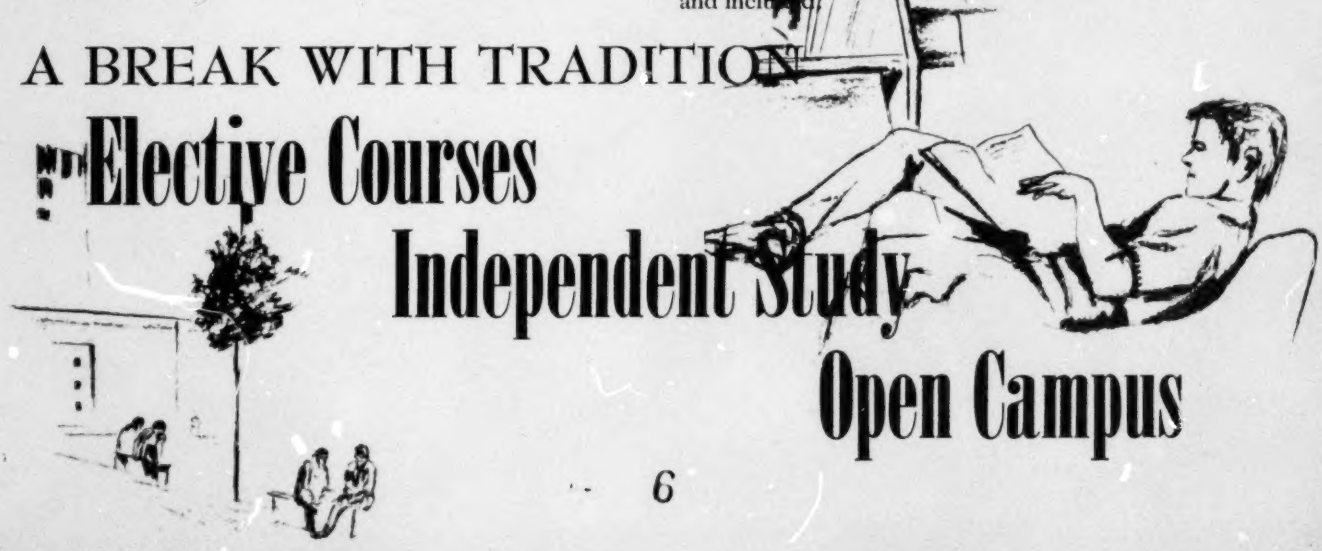
In the program's first three years of operation, a total of eighty-five mini-courses developed by forty-eight teachers and four administrators were taught. Each year the offerings were determined by student requests. Courses were added and deleted as teachers left, were reassigned or were added to the staff. The subjects reflected both student and staff interests and included:

A BREAK WITH TRADITION

Elective Courses

Independent Study

Open Campus



Business
Business Machines
Introduction to Accounting
Income Tax
Typing Refresher
Stenoscript

English
Business English
Speed Reading
Contemporary Novel
Contemporary Theatre
Filmmaking
Humor as an Art Form
Classical Mythology
Other Realities
The Art of Readable Writing
Bible as Literature
Golden Age of Radio
The Struggle to Be
Will the Real Alice . . . .?
Unexplained Phenomena
Human Essence: Love
English Review – Scholastic Aptitude

Fine & Industrial Arts
Jewelry and Lapidary
Auto Maintenance
Advanced Jewelry
Electricity
Home Repairs
Architecture

Languages
Conversational French
Conversational Italian
Practical French
Introduction to Russian
Foreign Customs

Science
Wandering Continents
Unique Ecological Areas of N.J.
Photography
Astronomy
Nutrition
Lab. Technology
Field Geology
Advanced Physics
Genetics
Intro. to Entomology
Marine Ecology
Oceanography

Mathematics
Pre Calculus I
Pre Calculus II
Metric System
Sets & Venn Diagrams
Intro. to Computer Programming
Logic
Number Systems
Consumer Mathematics
Analytic Geometry
Intro. to Trigonometry
College Math
Math Seminar
Probability & Statistics
Plane Trigonometry
Math Review – Scholastic Aptitude Test
Math Review – Achievement Test
Computer Math

Social Studies
American Indian
Soviet Union
Abnormal Behavior
State and Local Government
Cultural Anthropology
Intellectual History of the U.S.
Intro. to Psychology
Stocks and Bonds
Students and the Law
Contemporary Foreign Affairs
American Political Parties
Constitution
Criminology
Ancient African Empires
Civil War and Reconstruction
Intro. to Socialism
Revolutionary China
Rise and Fall of Civilization
Southeast Asia

Miscellaneous
History of Jazz
Sports Officiating
Secondary Education
Prevention of Athletic Injuries
Antiques

Mini-elective courses vary in length from one facet to three depending upon the complexity of the topic and student demand. A compendium of the course outlines is available at cost in the project director.

Independent Study

Participating students were encouraged to undertake at least one independent study project under the guidance of a faculty member. These projects included research papers, original musical compositions, voluntary work in the local community, tutoring, and handicraft projects. The only parameters for the selection of independent study projects were that they represent a well thought out plan and purpose by the student. Faculty members offered guidance through regular (though unscheduled) talks with the students on the progress of their work. An evaluation of each project was made as it was completed and grades and credits were assigned.

Preceptorials

Preceptorials are the seminar groups which tie the senior program together. They are made up of small groups of students randomly assigned to a teacher or preceptor. They are designed as encounter groups and homeroom units. Preceptors help students select independent study projects, discuss their scope and content, and help to evaluate the projects. They also "keep lines of communication" open between teacher and administrator.

Open Campus

The open campus concept is a Board of Education policy which permits students to use their unscheduled time in a variety of ways, including leaving the campus. It was instituted as a result of the Board's conviction that it would help students learn to choose both their own destinations and destinies. It also provides the framework necessary for the flexible scheduling required by the senior elective program. A student survey has shown that most students use their free time in the following ways:

Reading in the library or resource centers.

Working on their own in laboratories or in the computer area.

Relaxing or entering in "bull sessions" in the senior lounge.

Meeting with teachers on an individual basis.

Working at jobs in the community.

Performing volunteer service projects in the community.

Visiting museums, libraries, historic sites in the nearby area.

"Goofing Off" out in the community.

Making up school work, tests, laboratories, etc. which were missed for a variety of reasons.

Tutoring underclassmen.

Working on independent study projects.

Conclusions

The senior elective program was designed to create an atmosphere of student-faculty inclusion rather than exclusion. Mini-courses were selected as reflections of student and faculty interests, not as whims of administrators in an "ivory tower." The emphasis was on self-directed learning. All of the goals were met for practically every course. The only negative criticism which might be made is that in some cases, perhaps, a few teachers may have gone "too far" in allowing students the choice of unlimited cutting and/or in the choice of selecting their own depth of involvement with their courses. That is, some students did not work very hard in a few courses.

A majority of seniors chose to do independent study. Many of the projects were highly creative and extremely well-done; some were just adequate and a few were poor. Most students left the confines of the school to do their projects. Libraries, governmental agencies, other schools, businesses, hospitals, industry, etc. were visited. Some students, as a result of their projects, found an area of interest they chose to pursue in college. Others found that they really were aiming their future vocational pursuits in wrong directions.

Preceptorials met with varying degrees of success. Some of the teachers found them to be an excellent way of maintaining communication with students, and carried on many social activities with them. A few of the teachers "dreaded" the experience and withdrew after a year. However, the precepts kept discipline problems to a minimum.

Open campus, feared by parents and teachers, was accepted by the community and students with little or no problem. Most of the students tried to arrange their schedules so that they would have a block of time "free" each day to do part-time work to earn money to further their education.

The senior program focuses on student initiated learning. It attempts to involve all members of the teaching community in teacher-learner transactions. It "directs rather than forces" students to learn, to be more responsible for their own behavior. It helps students to leave the confines of educational institutions using the entire community as a learning center. Most important, however, it allows for educational alternatives. Students may choose to be as traditional as they like in course selection by taking only year-long major subjects; or, they may be as innovative as possible through the scheduling of mini-electives and doing independent study. They may, of course, take an interim route, choosing some of each. Teachers like the program because it gets them closer to youngsters and makes their teaching day less boring. Administrators see their new role as facilitating rather than "telling."

Interest in the senior program is so high that it has prompted more students to telescope their major courses into three years to allow for greater variety in the twelfth grade. The preceptorial phase of the program has stimulated the evolvement of T/A's or teacher advisorships in grades 9-11. These groups aim at values clarification, basic human interaction, and career investigation, all natural "lead ins" to the senior year. The overall result is a more relaxed educational atmosphere where students learn about themselves, their relations to others, and their future roles in work and play.

Compendia of the mini-courses offered in the Senior Elective Program and student and teacher analyses of the program are available at cost from the project director.

EVALUATION DESIGN AND RESULTS

In this evaluation design, the students totally participating in the alternative program at Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School were considered the "treatment" group. Students completing a conventional program at a school in another district were the "comparison" group.

The comparison of the two schools shows that although the schools are not identical, both are clearly at the upper end of intelligence and socio-economic scales. To the extent that the populations are different, the comparison school is slightly higher on both the intelligence and socio-economic scales necessitating a statistical adjustment.

All tests were administered two weeks before graduation to a random sample of sixty-three seniors from Rumson-Fair Haven Regional, and a random sample of seventy-three seniors from the conventional high school.

Goal #1

Rumson-Fair Haven Regional Senior High School students participating totally in the alternative senior year program will achieve as well as students participating in a conventional program in their knowledge and use of social students concepts.

The Sequential Test of Educational Progress II: Social Studies (1969) was used to test this goal. The rationale for this selection of the social studies area is that it is considered the most "innovative" aspect of the elective program.

The Rumson and control students in another district were compared using an analysis of covariance. On the STEP Social Studies Test no significant difference was obtained, indicating that the two programs were producing the same amount of learning in social studies. The adjusted means slightly favor Rumson-Fair Haven students, although the difference is small.

Goal #2

Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School seniors participating totally in the alternative senior year program will significantly exceed students participating in a conventional program in their satisfaction with and interest in their current educational experience.

Two indices of school sentiment were used. The first, *Imagine That* is a measure primarily of attitudes

toward the teaching process experienced. The second, the *School Sentiment Index* developed by the Instructional Objectives Exchange (10X) at U.C.L.A., measures general attitudes toward the whole school experience.

On *Imagine That*, the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional seniors have a significantly higher adjusted mean than high school seniors in a conventional program. The Rumson-Fair Haven Regional seniors feel significantly better toward the teaching that they have experienced in the alternative program.

In addition to this, the results on the *School Sentiment Index* also support the finding that the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional seniors feel better about their school experiences. The Rumson-Fair Haven Regional seniors have a significantly higher adjusted mean than the high school seniors in a conventional program.

EXPORTABILITY OF THE SENIOR ELECTIVE PROGRAM

In districts which are potential users of this program there must be interest on the part of students, teachers, administrators and the Board of Education in changing the twelfth grade curriculum to offer a wide range of choice in topics and modes of study. The faculty must be willing to "give" in the way of more teaching time to the curriculum, especially in its formative stage. Administrators and the Board of Education must agree to support a program that may "ruffle the feathers" of conservative adults in the community. And the community will have to accept the Board of Education's investment of staff and faculty time and possibly additional funds in the program's start-up.

The replication cost of the Senior Elective program will vary from district to district depending upon staffing patterns, provision of planning and preparation time for staff, and scheduling procedures. It is the anticipation of the project staff that the mini-courses which they have developed and the analyses of the project that they have written will be useful to others and will defray a portion of the replication costs. In most cases, an adaptation of this program will be appropriate only for districts that already use a modular scheduling procedure, but the use of certain project components is also feasible within a traditional scheduling pattern.

If another district follows the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional pattern, a summer period may be used by students, teachers, and administrators for planning. An alternative, however, is to schedule the planning time throughout the school year. Participants may be willing to work during regular class time, planning periods and after school hours.

Once the recommendations of the planning group have been made and accepted, time must be provided for administrators to set up the appropriate guidance and class scheduling procedures. Teachers and possibly administrators must prepare their courses. If the faculty and staff agree that they will require special training, provision for it must also be made.

The costs of replicating this program, therefore, are primarily those of providing time for faculty, staff, and students to plan and prepare. No special facilities, materials, or equipment will be required unless called for by the courses themselves. Training costs may be necessary depending upon the needs of faculty and staff and the requirements of the new curriculum. These costs may be provided through the reallocation of staff and faculty planning and preparation time, or through the payment of stipends for summer work. If special training is scheduled, the cost of consultants must also be accounted for. In this discussion of costs, it is important to point out that they are associated with the start-up of the program, and may be prorated over one or more years if the program is introduced on a gradual basis. Maintenance costs should not require any increase in expenditures.

To offer educators assistance in learning about the Senior Elective Program and materials and consultation assistance in the consideration of its adaptation in another site, a project staff has been funded by ESEA, Title III to carry out a dissemination plan described in the next section.

NATIONAL DISSEMINATION PLAN

Brochures describing the Senior Elective Program are available to interested parties free of charge. Visits to the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School to see the program may be arranged with the project director. Teachers, administrators, and students, who are part of the program, are available on a limited basis to give orientation presentations outside of the district. Priority will be given to audiences of fifty or more.

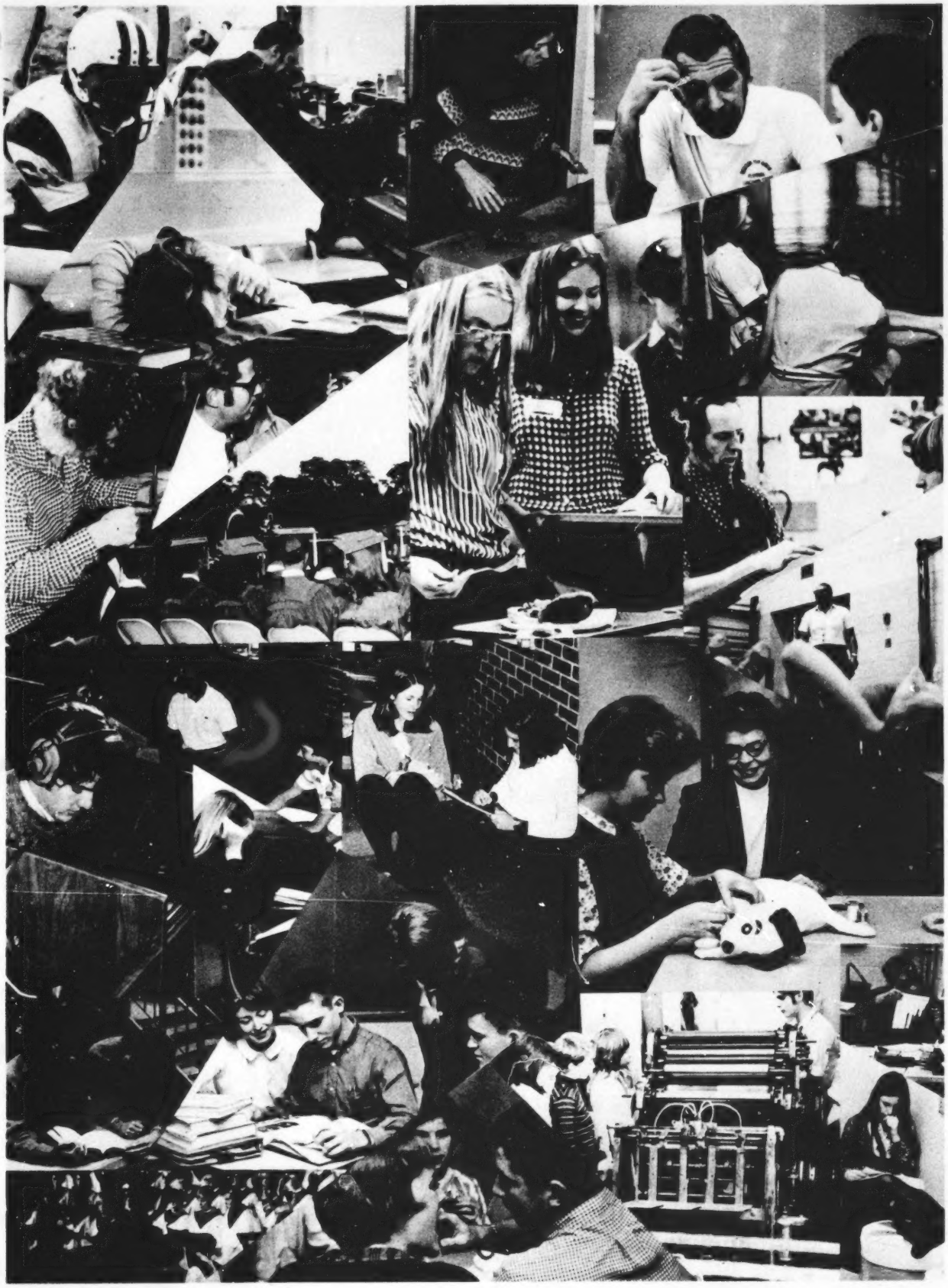
The consultation services of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional faculty and staff are available on a limited basis to districts that are seriously considering an adoption of the program. An application for these services is available from the project director.

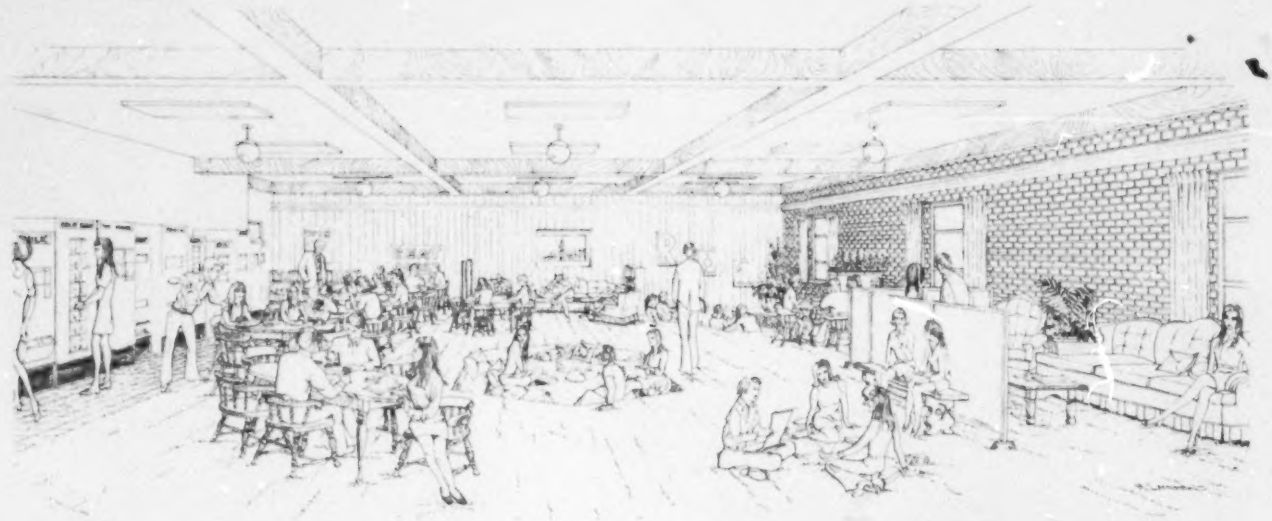
The faculty, staff, and students of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School have prepared two manuals for persons interested in detailed information: a compendium of the mini-courses offered in the Senior Elective Program, and a compendium of teacher and student analyses of the program. A descriptive filmstrip-cassette is also available. These may be purchased at cost and may be ordered from the project director.

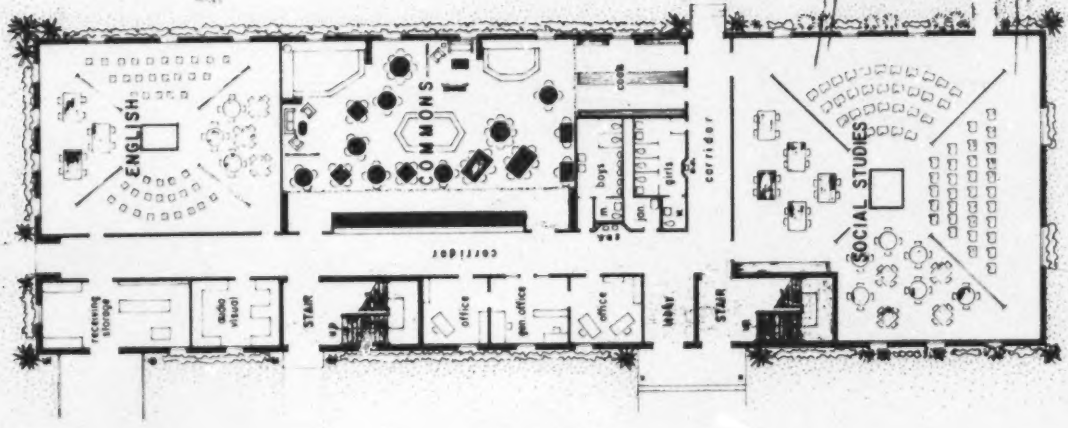
There is no charge for the services of the project staff. Travel expenses within New Jersey are funded by ESEA, Title III. Travel and lodging expenses in states other than New Jersey must be borne by the hosts.

Further information about the Senior Elective Program and the dissemination services and materials available may be obtained from:

Newton Beron, Project Director
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum and Public Relations
Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School
Rumson, New Jersey 07760
(201) 842-1597



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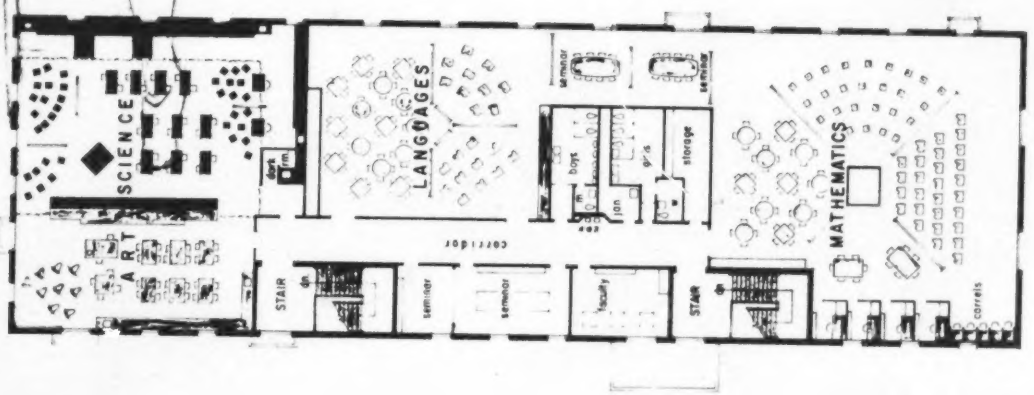

SECOND FLOOR

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Administrative Staff
Superintendent
Dr. John F. Kinney, Jr.
Assistant Superintendents
Mr. Newton Beron
Mr. Albert J. Loux
Mr. Donald F. Trotter

Participants in the initial development of the project — Summer, 1971:

Teachers
Mr. Donald Beidler
Mr. Robert Kasten
Mr. William Kern
Mr. Alex Koharski
Mr. Alan Lyster
Mr. James Parker

Students

Nadine Albert
Cynthia Botti
James Cottrell
Judy Curchin
Margo Kahn
Janet Kelly
Leonard Kovensky
Janet Lob
Diane Manning
Daniel Miles
Michael Reagan
Thelma Schwarz
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Robert Trotter
Jeffrey White
Ann Witman

Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School District
Ridge Road
Rumson, New Jersey 07760

* Senior Elective Program
Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School

Rumson, New Jersey

OVERVIEW

The Senior Elective Program, designed by eighteen high school students and six high school faculty members in the summer of 1971, was initiated as part of an effort to update curriculum and as a complement to the construction of an open-space building to be used exclusively by seniors. The study group made the following recommendations to the Board of Education:

1) Redesign the school calendar from four marking periods to five, called "facets," each to conclude with one of the regular vacation periods.
2) Encourage students to telescope the traditional academic courses into the first three years of high school, thus leaving the senior year primarily for elective courses.
3) Design senior elective courses to reflect student and faculty interests. Electives should vary in length from one to five facets and be graded either pass-fail or with letter grades according to student choice.
4) Encourage seniors to develop independent study projects under the guidance of a faculty member during the middle two or three facets.
5) Assign seniors randomly to small discussion groups or "precepts" led by faculty members whose goals would be to provide support for independent study and contribute to individual understanding through group interaction.
6) Allow seniors the freedom of an open campus whereby they attend classes but need not be present during unscheduled time.

These curricular suggestions were refined during the 1971-1972 school year. Teachers worked on new courses of study. Administrators, department chairmen, guidance counselors and teachers were trained in alternative teaching styles. Preceptors were chosen and students were assigned randomly to them. Students were carefully counseled to make certain that course selections would support anticipated education and vocational pursuits, and a master schedule was drawn up for the new curriculum.

Concurrent with the curriculum revision an open-space building was erected consisting of five learning areas each of which may be subdivided by flexible, movable partitions. Stacking chairs, arm chairs, study booths, tables and open-offices were selected for each department. Learning areas were outfitted with blackboard space, projection screens and storage

*Approved for national dissemination

closets. The senior building with its new curriculum opened in September, 1972, and is now fully supported by the local Board of Education. The program serves approximately 320 students per year.

Validated in 1974, the program was approved for national dissemination by the Dissemination Review Panel of the United States Office of Education.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM

The program's replication in another site is defined by:

1) independent study programs
2) mini-courses
3) preceptorials

GOALS, EVALUATION DESIGN, AND RESULTS

Students totally participating in the alternative program at Rumson-Fair Haven High School were considered the "treatment" group. Students completing a conventional program at a school in another district were the "comparison" group. The comparison of the students in the two schools shows that, though not identical, all are clearly at the upper end of both the intelligence and socio-economic scales. Students in the comparison school are slightly higher on both the intelligence and socio-economic scales, necessitating a statistical adjustment.

All tests were administered two weeks before graduation to a random sample of sixty-three seniors from Rumson-Fair Haven and seventy-three seniors from the conventional high school.

Goal #1

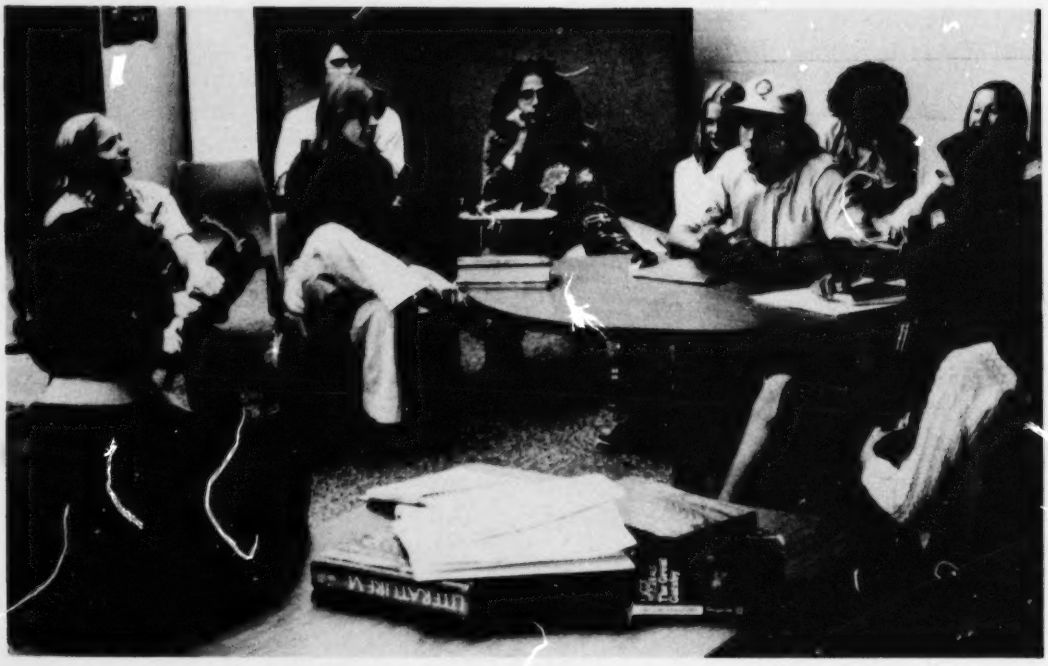
Rumson-Fair Haven Regional Senior High School students participating totally in the alternative senior year program will achieve as well as students participating in a conventional program in their knowledge and use of social studies concepts.

The Sequential Test of Educational Progress II: Social Studies (1969) was used to test this goal, since the social studies area was considered the most "innovative" aspect of the elective program. The Rumson and control students in another district were compared using an analysis of covariance. On the STEP Social Studies Test no significant difference was obtained, indicating that the two programs were producing the same amount of learning in social studies. The adjusted means slightly favor Rumson-Fair Haven students, although the difference is small.

Goal #2

Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School Seniors participating totally in the alternative senior year program will significantly exceed students participating in a conventional program in their satisfaction with, and interest in, their current educational experience.

Two indices of school sentiment were used. The first, *Imagine That,* is a measure primarily of attitudes toward the teaching process experienced. The second, the *School Sentiment Index* developed by the Instructional Objectives Exchange (IOX) at U.C.L.A., measures general attitudes toward the whole school experience. On *Imagine That,* the Rumson-Fair



Haven seniors had a significantly higher adjusted mean than seniors in a conventional program. The Rumson-Fair Haven seniors felt significantly better toward the teaching they had experienced in the alternative program. In addition, the results on the *School Sentiment Index* also support the finding that the Rumson-Fair Haven seniors felt better about their school experiences. The Rumson-Fair Haven seniors had a significantly higher adjusted mean than the high school seniors in a conventional program.

COSTS

Replication costs will vary with the staff and curriculum resources of potential adopter districts. Provision must be made for cooperative planning among students and staff, curriculum revision, and staff preparation. To some extent these costs should be covered by a reallocation of current expenditures.

DISSEMINATION SERVICES AND MATERIALS

The Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School has been funded by ESEA, Title IV-C as a demonstration site where visitors may see the senior elective program in operation and talk to participating students and staff. Requests for a visit and/or a brochure describing the program should be made to the project director.

For educators in the State of New Jersey, who sign a commitment to replicate the program, the Rumson-Fair Haven staff offers training and follow-up consultation free of charge. Educators out of state must pay expenses and consulting fees.

The administrative and teaching staff of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School district have prepared the following materials available to interested educators free or at cost. Checks made payable to the Rumson-Fair Haven Board of Education should accompany orders for materials and be mailed to the project director.

Final Project Report	Free of charge	**Courses of Study in:**	
A Resource Compendium and Profile of the Rumson-Fair Haven Regional Senior Elective Program (Outlines of seventy-six mini-courses)	$7.00	Social Studies	$2.50
		Business	1.00
		Industrial Arts	1.00
		English	2.50
		Science	2.00
Filmstrip-tape The Senior Elective Program	$12.50	**Administration Manual**	1.25

Inquiries about the project and its dissemination services, training, and materials should be addressed to the project director.

CONTACT PERSON

Newton Beron, Project Director
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Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School
Rumson, New Jersey 07760
(201) 842-1597